

**Summary of the Eighth Sustainable Fisheries Interim Coordination Mechanism Meeting
UN House, Barbados, Wednesday, 27th March, 2019**

Participants

Name	Abbreviation	Designation	Organization
Mrs. Yvette Diei-Ouadi	YD	Secretary	WECAFC/FAO
Mr. Jeremy Mendoza	JM		WECAFC/FAO
Maren Headley	MaH	Research & Resource Assessment	CRFM
Mr. Milton Haughton	MH	Regional Director	CRFM
Mr. Reinaldo Morales	RM	Regional Director	OSPESCA
Mrs. Laverne Walker	LW	Senior Project Officer	CLME+ PCU

Agenda

1. Approval of the summary of the ninth meeting of the IFCM
2. WECAFC reorientation process
3. Review, status update and revision of the IFCM workplan
4. Update IUU fishing strategy and action plan
5. Permanent Coordination Mechanism and sustainable financing plan process
6. Update on the SOMEE development
7. Joint CRFM-OSPESCA Ministerial meeting
8. Update of the WECAFC 17 Session
9. Joint meeting calendar
10. Any other business

Meeting Development

- MH: offered welcoming words. A special welcome was extended to the WECAFC Secretary, Ms. Yvette Diei-Ouadi in her first IFCM meeting.
- the proposed meeting agenda was approved with no changes.

1. Approval of summary of the ninth Meeting of the IFCM

- The summary of the eighth meeting was reviewed, amended and approved.

2 – WECAFC Reorientation Process

- YD: expressed feelings for a successful WECAFC Reorientation Workshop, with countries expressing the direction they wished this process to go. The NAFO representative clarified queries from countries. There is hope countries will seek ownership role in determining the feasibility and establishing the proposed entity/arrangement.
- MH: supported the mandate of an RFMO that will have binding powers in the ABNJ, but expressed concern of his Member States regarding the WECAFC 16 decision in taking over the responsibility of conservation, management and development of the fisheries resources, but should continue providing advice and technical assistance to the States to carry out their responsibilities. As such, CRFM was troubled by the documentation and pronouncements emanating from FAO alluding country support. It was explained that during the workshop RFMO would work with countries on

capacity building, technology transfer, trade related issues in the areas under national sovereignty or jurisdiction to assist countries discharge their rights and obligations under international law. CRFM countries will continue their consultations to discussion the development and arrangement for the proposed entity/agreement.

- LW: asked for clarification about the interpretation of the concept “shared and transboundary stocks”, and it was explained that shared and transboundary stocks appeared to vary among countries. For some considered to be the same, while for others interpreted as different. Further clarification may be needed.
- RM: recommended that better articulated and clear role and function of the proposed entity/arrangement is needed to avoid misinterpretation and ensure is well understood by all WECAFC countries. As such, further recommended WECAFC provide workshop documents also in Spanish and French. Clarification of the regulatory country areas vs. the regional organization area is needed. Informed of the creation of a Technical Group to analyse and discuss this topic.
- LW: proposed the creation of a technical group with country representation to continue the discussions of the RFMO, which was well received.
- YD: noted that this topic would need to be discussed further with WECAFC countries and that the pros and cons of each option would need to be further analysed. RFMO need to fit under an Article XIV structure under FAO constitution and most likely have to be established as an intergovernmental organisation.

3: Review, Status Update and Revision of the IFCM Workplan

Queen Conch

- YD: 3rd meeting of this Working Group took place 30 October-1 November 2018 in Panama. CRFM will be the new convener. The group revised TORs and developed a comprehensive work program for the period 2019 – 2021, which will be presented at the 17 WECAFC session. The scientific sub group, on the three stipulated in the regional management plan, was enacted. Its 1st meeting was planned for April/2019 and shall focus on conversion factor, simplification of CITES-NDF, and priority research as recommended.
- MH: confirmed that CRFM is now the Working Group Convener and the proposal is going through in the processes of being endorsed by the ministers. Announced that Jamaica enabled a moratorium due to low stock abundance following a recent fishery independent survey, and other CRFM Member States such as Belize, The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos have also indicated a decrease in stock abundance.
- RM: informed of negative trends being observed in Honduras and Nicaragua, and they are trying to determine the reason for this decrease.
- The group agreed that further data and information was needed to more carefully monitor the stocks and determine the reason for decrease in stock abundance. Climate change, *Sargassum* influx or IUU fishing recommended to be further explored. They recognized the need for conducting more surveys.
- YD: in the last few months there have been two major incidences where foreign vessels (Honduran and Dominican Republic boats) have been arrested and convicted for illegal fishing of conch in Jamaican, Bahamian and Colombian waters.
- LW: GCFI is working on developing a research strategy which is supposed to identify research gaps for important fisheries in the region, included the queen conch fishery. Asked if the scientific community

was informed of the apparent stock decline as they may be able to provide the region with some answers. The functioning of an expert team is working on that.

- YD: indicated that the traceability standard they are working on could be used in enhancing management of the queen conch fishery. This traceability standard is being developed to target the queen conch, spiny lobster and sea cucumber fisheries.
- RM: two countries are working on explore if conversion factors could be harmonised and in how better provide capacity to a few countries in the region to work on the issue of the conversion factor.
- MaH: reported a CFMC consultant is working on compiling existing queen conch educational materials.

Spiny Lobster

RM: OSPESCA has undertaken a revision of the Spiny Lobster Management Plan which will be shared with CRFM and WECAFC and then be adopted at the WECAFC 17 session. At present, there are different views in how the regulations should be amended, particularly in relation to the closed season. 27 delegates participated in the stock assessment workshop, including Colombia, Jamaica and The Bahamas, however, they did not sign to the Sub-project despite numerous efforts in attempting to engage them. Another workshop, funded by TNC, will be conducted to agree on the software for harmonizing lobster data amongst the OSPESCA countries.

- RM: the whole OSPESCA region have observed a decrease in spiny lobster landings for the past two years and attempting to investigate why. Increase data collection and testing of a new methodology for data collection in Nicaragua are envisioned to be adopted by other countries.
- The group highlighted need to strengthen data collection, stock assessments and monitoring in queen conch and spiny lobster fisheries.

Flyingfish

- MH: the following activities have been accomplished by the Flyingfish Sub-Project: a) revision of the subregional management plan, b) data policy, and c) the regional database which needs to be populated upon the go ahead from countries. The Working Group met and the revision of the subproject outputs are expected to be completed by August 2019. Additional work is needed to ensure buy-in of sub-project outputs and so a four-month extension have requested (until December 2019). Indicated the Agreement with France has continued to be problematic, and a draft Agreement its being reviewed. Possible meeting with France in Saint Lucia to work on the document in the coming weeks.
- MH: CRFM should be receiving approximately USD 300,000 from the Canadian Government, channeled through UNDP and the CLME+ Project to work on issues pertaining to gender, youth and decent work as outlined under CRFM's Policy Statement on Gender and Youth. The proposed timeline for the implementation of activities under this grant is 18 months.

Sharks and Rays

- MaH: Belize is the current Convener of this Working Group. A Regional Plan of Action was developed by an independent consultant and shared with countries for their feedback. However minimal responses have been received. Additional funds are required to continue this process.
- JM: WECAFC can provide assistance in finalizing the plan. ICCAT is developing an action plan without the WECAFC engagement. The sharks and rays regional action plan is not limited to oceanic species,

and will engage with ICCAT in the future. At the WECAFC reorientation workshop, the US delegate indicated of an ICCAT Convention Agreement, which includes the species list (under revision), meaning that shark species could possibly be amended in the near future. The group discussed approaches for enhanced integration between the three RFBs and ICCAT, such as individual MOUs between an RFB and ICCAT, or amends in the Fisheries ICM to include ICCAT, or both. The next meeting of the ICCAT Commission is scheduled to take place in November in Curacao and representation from the region will be important.

Shrimp and Groundfish

- JM: the data and statistics workshop was held with the participation of sub-project countries in October 2018. The workshop provided an update to the FIRMS inventory. Data repositories were also discussed. A Stock assessment training workshop (22 – 25 January 2019) was held in Trinidad, and utilized data limited methods, with the technical support from Jason Cope, University of Washington. Yann Laurent, FAO consultant, assessed the fisheries information management system. The same assessment is being undertaken for Suriname with support from the REBYC II Project. The development of Regional and National Shrimp and Groundfish Management Plans, EAF training, NIC strengthening, and gender assessment work is expected to commence soon with CERMES. An initial EAF training workshop was undertaken already in Brazil. A stock assessment workshop is planned for July 2019 (date yet to be confirmed). A meeting of the Shrimp and Groundfish Working Group will also be planned after the development of sub-regional management plan and stock assessment workshop.

Spawning Aggregations

- YD: the 2nd Spawning Aggregations Working Group meeting took place in March 2018, and recommendations were presented to the SAG. The regional plan was not endorsed; it would be amended and re-submitted for the next SAG meeting.

Fish Aggregating Devices

- YD: Fish Aggregating Devices (FAD) working group was planned (30 April – 2 May), in Puerto Rico. The previous meeting was in 2013. OSPESCA has now joined the working group. The Convener is Mr. Manoel Cifuentes from Guatemala. The Group reviewed the management plan and manuals, and developed new Terms of Reference.
- MH: FAD management plan for CRFM countries was approved and it can be accessed on the CRFM website. Grenada and Dominica are examples of the benefits received from FAD fisheries.
- YD: fisherfolk need to participate in the next Working Group meeting to share experiences and be informed of the process.
- MH: shared the final report of the CARIFCO project and provided contact information for leaders of fisherfolk organizations from Grenada and Dominica who could be invited to the Working Group meeting.

4: Update IUU Fishing Strategy and Action Plan

- JM: the 3rd meeting of the IUU Fishing Working Group took place in 26-28 September 2018. The regional plan of action is focused on four basic principles: a) capacity development requirements, b) policy and legal framework, c) regional cooperation, and d) MCS, compliance and enforcement. Four

sub-groups in alignment with these principles were proposed. A meeting (6-7 March 2019) with two representatives from each of these sub-groups analysed various topics including the port state measures, requirements in relation to flag states, and others.

- JM: a consultant is now working on the topics provided by the subgroups expecting to have the first draft by 30 April, then submitted to the IUU Fishing Working Group. A second draft is expected to be submitted to the SAG for their review, and then to the WECAFC 17 session. The baseline assessment of IUU fishing for the region was not undertaken, the RPOA will be a framework document.
- The group highlighted documented cases of IUU fishing taking place in the region, recognizing its important impacts on some fisheries. The RPOA should provide guidelines to assist countries in undertaking such kind of assessment.
- MH: fisheries enforcement personnel from CRFM Member States have been receiving training from the Caribbean Regional Security System (RSS)/ CRFM led training workshops. The third training workshop is scheduled for July 2019 targeting primarily the OECS sub-region.
- JM: the Shrimp and Groundfish Sub- Project would be interested in supporting the participation of individuals from Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname and Guyana for the July training session.
- RM: OSPESCA received support from FAO to develop a *“Regional Strategy to Prevent, Discourage and Eradicate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing with emphasis on Jurisdictional Waters and Fishing Communities.”* At present, they are working with the Security Commission to combat IUU fishing and is paying special attention to areas within the Caribbean region. OSPESCA is preparing documentation to be shared with WECAFC.
- YD: OSPESCA Sub-Regional Strategy will be presented to the WECAFC 17 session.

6: Permanent Coordination Mechanism and Sustainable Financing Plan process

- This discussion was included as part of the reorientation of WECAFC, to reduce confusions regarding the function of the proposed permanent Coordination Mechanism (PCM) and how it relates to the reorientation of WECAFC.
- MH: the PCM should complement whatever entity the region agrees to for regional fisheries management by linking the ocean related sectors. PCM is innovative, but is up to the region to agree on something that is practical and feasible, otherwise it would not work. The regional organisations would also need to determine what changes would be required once these new arrangements become functional, and recommended to include the PCM on the agenda of the WECAFC 17 session. It also recommended that the CLME+ PCU prepare documentation to help countries understanding the linkages and differences between the proposed PCM and proposed entity/arrangement to replace WECAFC.
- LW: a draft report on Phase II of the PCM Consultancy was shared with the ICM members for their consideration and is now being revised to be submitted to the CLME+ PCU in mid-April, and then to CLME+ countries for review and consultation. The second regional consultation is expected to take place 30 July -1 August in Panama.

7: Update on the SOMEE Development

- LW: a decision to downscale ambitions of SOMEE and focus on Chapters 1, 2 and spiny lobster has been made. the PCU has received drafts of the State of Convention Report of land-based sources of Pollution and the State of Habitats Report prepared by UNEP-CEP to be integrated into SOMEE Chapter 2. OSPESCA is working on the development of the spiny lobster chapter, which will be used

as a guidance chapter for the remaining SOMEE chapters, and it is intended to present this chapter at the WECAFC 17 session. YD, this intention has not been expressed before, and at this stage the 17 session agenda is more or less final.

- MH: CRFM is willing to work on the flyingfish chapter, but they would need a template and happy to hear that advancements with the spiny lobster chapter. Asked for access to the spiny lobster chapter in order to begin their work on the flyingfish chapter.
- LW: was not aware that CRFM would be working on the development of the flyingfish chapter and indicated that she would inform her colleagues in the PCU so that they could get in touch with CRFM.

8: Joint CRFM-OSPESCA Ministerial Meeting

- MH: the Joint CRFM-OSPESCA Ministerial Meeting originally planned for early May 2019, need to be postponed (probably October), considering time availability from the two organizations.
- LW: remained that funding allocated under the project had to be spent in 2019, making difficult a push back to 2020.

9: Update of the WECAFC 17 Session

- YD: WECAFC 17 session will take place in Florida 15-18 July, and invitations will be sent out in April. The agenda has been developed and the second draft is now available. Some issues still need to be included on the agenda: PCM, Caribbean Spiny Lobster Regional Management Plan, IUU, queen conch, climate change, etc. The second draft of the WECAFC 17 session agenda with the Fisheries ICM will be shared.

10: Joint Meeting Calendar

- YD: highlighted the importance of close planning of meetings of the Regional Fisheries Bodies to ensure there is no overlap.
- LW: CLME+ Project created a joint events calendar which all members of the CLME+ Project Executive Group had access to and which allows them to include information on upcoming meetings. The CLME+ Project representative indicated that she would share the link to the calendar to the IFCM. https://clmeplus.org/events/2019-04/?tribe-bar-date=2019-04&tribe_eventcategory%5B%5D=61&tribe_eventcategory%5B%5D=218&tribe_eventcategory%5B%5D=207&tribe_eventcategory%5B%5D=222&tribe_eventcategory%5B%5D=64

11: Any Other Business

- The set up a WhatsApp chat group was recommended, and MH mentioned members of the IFCM to stay in contact so that they are up-to-date on certain fisheries related issues.

The meeting adjourned at 15:00, wishing all a safe journey.